Chinar Wildlife sanctuary in Kerala

4095. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that neolithic (stone age) 'dolmens' i.e. burin caves in the middle of Marayoor Sandalwood forest in the Chinar Wild Life Sanctuary in district Idukki (Kerala) are being dug up by granite exporters;

(b) whether it is a fact that 'dolmens' have been listed by the Archaeological Survey of India as ancient man-made structure;

(c) whether it is a fact that these ancient structures are held sacred by Tribals and Hindus alike;

(d) whether it is a fact that Gramite-mining is destroying stone-age architechtural remains and also running the sensitive ecology of the area; and

(e) if so, what immediate steps Government are taking in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (d) State Government has reported that no mining activity is being allowed in the Sanctuary.

(b) State Government of Kerala has reported that dolmens in Idukki District of Kerala and the site at Marayur village are not centrally protected as monuments under the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (Central Act). However, the pre-historic caves in Marayur are protected as Monuments under the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains, Kerala Act, 1963. Dolmens in Marayur and in other parts of Idukki District in Kerala are Megalithic Monuments belonging to Iron Age.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Environmental Degradation in Himachal Pradesh

4096. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the environmental degradation in Himachal Pradesh caused by the Cement Industry categorised as one of the highest polluting Industry;

(b) whether Government are also aware that huge cement plant besides a number of miniplants are proposed to be set up in the State at a time when the State is ravaged with environmental pollution; and

(c) if so, in what manner Government propose to deal with the environmental pollution in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) The Central Government in cooperation with the Central Pollution Control Board and the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board is constantly monitoring the control of highly polluting industries including Cement.

The Government have costituted a Committee for examining the environmental impact of proposed cement industries and related mining activities in Himachal Pradesh. The Committee has examined and cleared one Cement Plant subject to certain con-